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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our comfort and guide, as we begin this day in the forward march of history, we acknowledge Your sovereignty. Your unfailing love and mercy continue to sustain us, and we put our hope in You.

Today, fill our lawmakers with Your wisdom, enabling them to shoulder the demands of decisions, the strain of conflict, and the uncertainties about tomorrow. Let Your justice guide their thoughts and Your righteousness direct their steps. Fill them with Your joy and use them for Your glory.

Make each of us a blessing and not a burden, a lift and not a load, a delight and not a drag.

We pray in the Name of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, February 29, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour. The Republicans will control the first half and the majority will control the second half.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the highway bill. We continue to work on a process to complete action on this bill. We are going to have to do that. If we can't get an agreement to move forward on this bill, I have no alternative but to try to stop the filibuster that is taking place. I hope we don't have to do that. We have agreed to work on amendments that are relevant and germane. Senator DURBIN, the whip, has worked on side-by-sides and other amendments, so we are ready to move forward, but we can't do it unless we get some basic cooperation, and it will be a shame if we can't move forward on this bipartisan bill.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the

Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the second half.

The Senator from Illinois.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, will the time be running on the minority party's first half hour?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum until a member of the minority appears.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY POLICY

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, back in 2008 then-Senator Obama said that under his policies energy costs would necessarily "skyrocket" and that he would "have preferred a gradual adjustment to higher gasoline prices." He indicated at the time that under his policies energy prices were going to go up. He mentioned that he would like a more gradual adjustment, but when he talked about those policies, he said energy costs would necessarily "skyrocket."

I think we now know which of the campaign promises the President has kept because we have seen energy prices skyrocket for most Americans. In fact, gasoline prices have doubled

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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